

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANTANA 00283 201002Z

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 PA-01 NSC-05 CIAE-00

NSAE-00 /030 W

-----102693 201008Z /20

R 200830Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0217

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANTANANARIVO 0283

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PROP MA US

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO SUBSIDIZE PUBLICATION
OF MALAGASY BOOK ABOUT THE U.S.

REF: 77 ANT 1205

1. SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST. I RECOMMEND THAT THE USG
FINANCE THE PRINTING OF A BOOK ABOUT TRAVELS IN THE U.S.,
BY A PROMINENT MALAGASY JOURNALIST. END SUMMARY AND ACTION
REQUEST.

2. THE PUBLISHER OF "MARESAKA," MR. RALAIARIJAONA (NO FIRST
NAME) WISHES TO PUBLISH IN BOOK FORM A SERIES OF APPROXIMATELY
FORTY ARTICLES WHICH HE WROTE FOLLOWING HIS IV GRANT TRIP TO
THE US IN 1975. THESE COLUMNS HAVE ALREADY APPEARED IN
HIS NEWSPAPER AND THEY REFLECT HIS BALANCED BUT GENERALLY
FAVORABLE IMPRESSIONS OF THE US. HOWEVER, MR. RALAIARIJAONA
CANNOT FINANCE THE PRINTING HIMSELF AND HAS ASKED US TO HELP.

3. I BELIEVE THIS REQUEST PROVIDES US WITH A GOOD OPPORTUNITY
TO MAKE AVAILABLE THROUGH COMMERCIAL CIRCUITS A FAVORABLE
VIEW OF THE US IN THE MALAGASY LANGUAGE BY A RESPECTED
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MALAGASY JOURNALIST (WHO HAS SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF MALAGASY JOURNALISTS). MUCH OF THE INFORMATION
PRESENTLY AVAILABLE ABOUT THE US IN COMMERCIAL LIBRARIES
IS CONTAINED IN CHINESE AND SOVIET PUBLICATIONS.
ALTHOUGH MR. RALAIARIJAONA'S NEWSPAPER WAS SUSPENDED FOR
SIX MONTHS EARLIER THIS YEAR (REFTEL), IT IS NOW BACK IN
PRINT WITH GOVERNMENT AUTHORIZATION. MR. RALAIARIJAONA'S PRO-

WEST ATTITUDE AND OCCASIONAL CRITICISMS OF PRESENT CONDITIONS IN MADAGASCAR HAVE NOT ENDEARED HIM TO THE RATSIRAKA REGIME, BUT HIS RECORD AS A FIGHTER FOR INDEPENDENCE AND OF OPPOSITION TO THE TSIRANANA REGIME (HE WAS JAILED BY BOTH THE FRENCH AND TSIRANANA) HAVE EARNED HIM A MEASURE OF GRUDGING RESPECT FROM EVEN THE MOST PROGRESSIVE LEADERS OF TODAY'S MADAGASCAR.

4. I DO NOT THINK WE RISK MUCH BY SUPPORTING MR. RALAIARIJAONA IN THIS ENDEAVOR, PARTICULARLY AS HIS JOURNALISTIC WRITINGS ARE AGAIN TOLDERATED BY THE GOVERNMENT. NOR DO I THINK WE SHOULD GO TO ANY GREAT PAINS TO HIDE OUR ROLE. MY PRESENT THINKING IS THAT IN HIS PREFACE OR INTRODUCTION, MR. RALAIARIJAONA WOULD THANK USIS ANTANANARIVO FOR ARRANGING THE TRAVEL GRANT AND FOR ITS ASSISTANCE IN HAVING THE BOOK PRINTED. WE WOULD, ON AN IF-ASKED BASIS, NOT DENY THAT WE HAD HELPED HIM GET IT PUBLISHED, AND WE WOULD DISTRIBUTE A NUMBER OF COPIES OURSELVES, WHICH WE WOULD OBTAIN IN EXCHANGE FOR OUR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION. I SEE NO REASON WHY IT WOULD BE A SUBJECT OF ANY EMBARRASSMENT TO US THAT WE HAD HELPED TO OBTAIN WIDER READERSHIP FOR MATERIAL WHICH IS ALREADY IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN.

5. I BELIEVE OUR SUPPORT SHOULD TAKE THE FORM OF A ONE-SHOT PAYMENT TO MR. RALAIARIJAONA OR DIRECTLY TO THE PRINTER FOR THE PRINTING COSTS. WE PRESENTLY ESTIMATE THAT IT WILL COST DOLS 1,500 TO PRINT ONE THOUSAND COPIES, WHICH IS ABOUT THE NUMBER THAT WE THINK THE COMMERCIAL

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CIRCUIT CAN ABSORB. I REQUEST, THEREFORE, AUTHORIZATION TO UNDERTAKE THIS PROJECT, AND INSTRUCTIONS AS TO ITS FUNDING.

6. THIS RECOMMENDATION IS CONCURRED IN BY ALL BUT ONE OF THE SUBSTANTIVE OFFICERS CONSULTED, INCLUDING THE PAO. THE DISSENTING OFFICER'S VIEWS ARE INCLUDED BELOW IN HIS OWN WORDS IN ACCORDANCE WITH 77 STATE 131292.

7. QUOTE: ONE MEMBER OF EMBASSY STAFF, WHILE AGREEING WITH OBJECTIVE OF GIVING THIS MATERIAL WIDER READERSHIP, BELIEVES THIS SHOULD BE DONE COMPLETELY AND DIRECTLY WITH USIS CONTRACTING FOR THE PRINTING ITSELF, EITHER HERE OR ELSEWHERE. PREFACE OR INTRODUCTION WOULD THANK MR. RALAIARIJAONA FOR USE OF HIS MATERIAL, AND USIS COULD GIVE MR. RALAIARIJAONA A FEW HUNDRED COPIES FOR HIM TO DISTRIBUTE AS HE SAW FIT. RESULT WOULD BE THAT BOOK WOULD BE PRINTED AND USG PARTICIPATION WOULD BE COMPLETELY OPEN WITH NO MONEY HAVING PASSED BETWEEN USG AND MR. RALAIARIJAONA. OTHERWISE, NO MATTER HOW WE PAY HIM, IT WILL APPEAR TO THE MALAGASY AS A PERSONAL PAYMENT FOR HIS FAVORABLE VIEWS OF THE US. END QUOTE.BARRETT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLICATIONS, BOOKS, TRAVEL REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ANTANA00283
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780077-0492
Format: TEL
From: ANTANANARIVO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780235/aaaabdrs.tel
Line Count: 116
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a61561d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3543092
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO SUBSIDIZE PUBLICATION OF MALAGASY BOOK ABOUT THE U.S.
TAGS: PROP, MA, US
To: STATE USIA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a61561d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014